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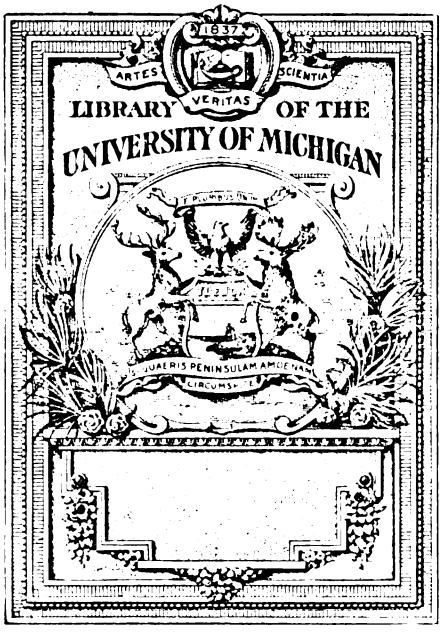
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THE

CHRONOLOGY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

FOUNDER OF THE
AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

BY

I. MINIS HAYS

One of the Secretaries of the Society

1706—1790

PHILADELPHIA
THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
1904

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

1706—1790

" Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis."—*Turgot.*

1706. Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston on January 6, old style, or January 17, new style.

1716. Assisted his father in his business of tallow chandler and soap boiler.

1718. Was apprenticed as a printer to his brother James.

1721. Began to write anonymous articles for the "New England Courant."

1723. October. Left home on account of differences with his brother James, and finally landed at Market street wharf in Philadelphia with only a Dutch dollar in his pocket, and got employment in the printing office of Samuel Keimer.

1724. Governor Sir William Keith proposed his setting up a printing office in Philadelphia, promised him his financial aid, and induced him to go to England to get an outfit. On his arrival in London, on December 24, he found to his dismay that the Governor's promises were worthless and that he was again stranded in a strange city without means. He immediately got work in Palmer's printing office in London.

1726. July 23. He returned to America in company with a Mr. Dunham, whose acquaintance he had made on his voyage out, and who tempted him back by the promise of a position as a clerk in a mercantile venture which he

was about to make in Philadelphia, where he arrived on October 11, but in a brief time the death of Dunham put an end to his career as a merchant. He then again engaged with Keimer.

1727. Formed among his ingenious acquaintances a club for mutual improvement, which he called "the Junto."

1728. Formed a partnership in the printing business with Hugh Meredith.

1729. Wrote and printed an anonymous pamphlet entitled "A Modest Enquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency."

September. Bought out the "Pennsylvania Gazette," which Keimer had started nine months before to defeat a similar project of Franklin's which had accidentally come to his knowledge. Under Franklin's management the Gazette soon became the most prosperous and influential newspaper in the Colonies.

1730. Appointed Public Printer by the Pennsylvania Assembly.

September. Married Deborah Read.

1731. Established the first circulating library in America—The Library Company of Philadelphia—which is still existing and has 210,000 volumes in its collection.

Participated in the formation of St. John's Lodge in Philadelphia, the first Masonic Lodge established in America.

1732. Wrote and began the publication of "Poor Richard's Almanac," of which three editions were exhausted within one month. It at once gained an immense popularity. The average sale for 25 years was 10,000 copies a year, and it has been translated into nearly every written language.

1733. Established a branch printing office in Charleston, S. C.

1734. Elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free Masons.

1736. Chosen Clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly.

December 7. Organized the first fire company in Philadelphia—the Union Fire Company.

1737. Appointed Postmaster at Philadelphia, also a Justice of the Peace.

1741. Established, in partnership with James Parker, a printing office in New York.

1742. Invented the Franklin Open Stove.

1743. Issued his "Proposals for Promoting Useful Knowledge among the British Plantations in America," which resulted in the formation in the same year of the first scientific society to be organized in America—the American Philosophical Society, of which he became the Secretary.

1744. Published an "Account of the newly-invented Pennsylvania Fire-places."*

1745. Began his experiments in electricity, and the discoveries that he subsequently made therein "have secured him undisputed rank amongst the most eminent of natural philosophers."

1747. Propounded his theory of electricity, which is known as the Franklinian theory and is still accepted by many physicists.

France and Spain being at war with Great Britain, Philadelphia was in danger of attack by their privateers. The Assembly having failed to pass a Militia law, Franklin excited the patriotism of Pennsylvania by voice and

* There is every reason to believe that Dr. Franklin communicated his early scientific observations and discoveries to the American Philosophical Society, but as the records of this Society before 1768 have been lost, and as the Society did not begin to publish its Transactions until 1769, it is impossible to fix the exact dates of these communications.

pen. He organized the citizens for the defense of Philadelphia and raised money and built and equipped a battery below the city. He wrote and published "Plain Truth, or serious considerations on the present state of the City of Philadelphia and Province of Pennsylvania," in which he exhorted his fellow-citizens to bear arms in self-defense; also a brief pamphlet entitled "The Absolute and Obvious Necessity of Self-defense in the present Conjuncture," etc.

1748. October 4. Chosen a member of the Council of Philadelphia.

Propounded his theory of the electrical condition in the Leyden jar.

1749. Retired from active business as a printer.

Appointed by the Governor a Commissioner of the Peace, and reappointed in 1752.

Established the identity of lightning and electricity.

Published his "Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania," which led to the formation of the College (afterward the University) of Pennsylvania, and he was chosen President of the Board of Trustees.

Appointed Provincial Grand Master of Pennsylvania.

1750. Elected to the Assembly of Pennsylvania and re-elected annually for 14 years.

The Assembly appointed him joint Commissioner with the Speaker (Mr. Norris) to make a treaty at Carlisle with the Indians.

1751. Promoted the founding of the Pennsylvania Hospital, the first of its kind in America. It is still existing and has extended its benefactions to over 400,000 patients. He served as Clerk and subsequently as President of its Board of Managers. As has been truly said, "he furnished the impulse to nearly every measure or project

which contemplated the welfare and prosperity of the city in which he lived."

October 1. Elected an Alderman.

His "Experiments and Observations on Electricity" was published in London in one volume 4to and went through three editions.

1752. April. Aided in establishing the first company in America for insuring against loss by fire—the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire—which is still in prosperous existence.

June. Made his celebrated kite experiments and discharged electricity from the clouds.

His "Experiments and Observations on Electricity" was translated into French and published at Paris, and a second edition appeared in 1756.

1753. Recommended that pointed rods be placed on buildings to prevent their being struck by lightning.

The Royal Society awarded him the Copley Gold Medal, and Louis XV directed his thanks to be sent to him for his useful discoveries in electricity.

Harvard and Yale Colleges conferred on him the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

Appointed Deputy Postmaster-General for the Continental Colonies.

1754. War between Great Britain and France being imminent, Governor Hamilton, with the approval of the Assembly, appointed him a Commissioner to represent the Province of Pennsylvania at a Congress ordered by the Lords of Trade to convene at Albany to confer with the Chiefs of the Six Nations with a view to devise means for the common defense. At this Congress Franklin presented his plan for the union of all the Colonies under one government, so far as might be necessary for defense

and other important general purposes. The plan was adopted by the Congress but failed to receive the approval of the Colonial Assemblies and the Lords of Trade.

1755. Appointed by the Pennsylvania Assembly a Commissioner for raising and expending money for the defense of the frontier against the French and Indians.

Sent by the Assembly to confer with Gen. Braddock concerning the defense of the Pennsylvania frontier, and in order to obtain the necessary supplies for Braddock's army he pledged his own property to upwards of 20,000 pounds in payment, and then "organized the transport and commissariat with an ability and foresight in marked contrast to the military conduct of the ill-fated expedition." He received the thanks of the Assembly for his great services.

By request of the Governor he took charge of the Northwestern frontier and provided for the defense of the inhabitants by raising troops and building a line of forts, of which the most important was Fort Allen, where the town of Wiessport now stands in Carbon County, on the Lehigh River some ten miles above Lehigh Gap.

Was chosen Colonel by the regiment of foot raised in Philadelphia in this emergency.

Drafted the Militia Act of Pennsylvania, which was passed on November 25.

In response to the application of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay to the Province of Pennsylvania for aid in the projected attack on Crown Point, Franklin advocated and the Assembly passed a grant of 10,000 pounds, but the Governor refused his assent to the bill unless the proprietary estates were exempted from any part of the tax that would be necessary to be levied, in accordance with the general instructions of the Penns to their Governors to

pass no act for levying taxes unless their estates were in the same act exempted. Franklin then devised a method by which the grant was made without requiring the assent of the Governor.

Published his "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, &c.," in conjunction with William Clarke's "Observations on the late and present Conduct of the French with regard to their Encroachments upon the British Colonies in North America, together with Remarks on the Importance of these Colonies to Great Britain." (Boston: S. Kneeland.)

1756. January 5. Appointed by the Governor Military Commissioner, with full power to dismiss and appoint military officers, for Northampton County, Pa.

Introduced street paving, cleaning and lighting into Philadelphia.

Elected Fellow of the Royal Society (April 29), and, as an additional mark of honor, by vote of the Council, he was relieved from the payment of all fees and it was ordered that he was to receive the Transactions without cost.

Elected a member of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, London.

William and Mary College, of Virginia, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

The Borough of Norfolk, April 10, made him a Burgess and Freeman.

1757. The Assembly finding that the Proprietaries obstinately persisted in requiring their Governors to withhold their assent from all tax bills which did not exempt their estate from the tax levied, or as Franklin expressed it, "in manacling their deputies with instructions inconsistent

not only with the privileges of the people but with the service of the Crown," resolved to petition the King against them and sent Franklin to England as their agent to present the petition and to urge their rights. Having failed with the King and the Penns in obtaining the desired redress, he suggested a compromise by which the unsurveyed lands of the Proprietaries were to be exempted, but the surveyed lands were to be assessed at the same rate as other property of that description. This was favorably reported upon and approved by George II, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the Penns, and made Franklin's first foreign mission a success.

1758. In the issue of "Poor Richard's Almanac" for this year, the last by him, he brought together the best of the proverbs, aphorisms, rhymes, etc., of the 24 previous annual issues "as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction." It was at once copied into all the newspapers of the Continent, reprinted in Great Britain as a broadside, and two translations of it were printed in France. It has been reprinted again and again under the title of "Father Abraham's Speech," "The Way to Wealth" or "La Science du Bonhomme Richard," and has proved itself one of the most popular of American writings. According to Paul Leicester Ford, "seventy editions of it have been printed in English, fifty-six in French, eleven in German and nine in Italian. It has been translated into Spanish, Danish, Swedish, Welsh, Polish, Gaelic, Russian, Bohemian, Dutch, Catalan, Chinese, Modern Greek and Phonetic writing. It has been printed at least four hundred times, and is today as popular as ever."

A German translation of his "Electrical Experiments"

was published at Leipzig. Dr. Priestley in his "History of Electricity" says "Nothing was ever written upon the subject of electricity which was more generally read and admired in all parts of Europe than these letters. There is hardly any European language into which they have not been translated."

1759. February 12. The University of St. Andrews (Scotland) conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws, and, as an additional honor, directed his diploma to be given to him without the payment of the customary fees, which were voted to be paid by the University.

September 5. Admitted as a "Burges and Gild-brother of Edinburgh."

At about this time was elected an Honorary Member of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh.

Published anonymously "An Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania from its origin, so far as regards the several points of controversy which have from time to time arisen between the several Governors of that Province and their several Assemblies," an 8vo volume of 444 pages.*

1760. Wrote a pamphlet entitled "The Interests of Great Britain considered with regard to her Colonies and the acquisition of Canada and Guadaloupe," to show that so long as Canada remained in the hands of the French, the English Colonies in North America could never be safe, nor peace in Europe permanent. Two years later, in the treaty of 1762, Great Britain secured the cession of Canada from France.

* It is said that Franklin denied the authorship of this work, which was generally ascribed to him at the time. No one else has ever claimed it, and if Franklin did not write the book, the presumption is very clear that it was written at his instigation and under his supervision, since he was the only person in England who possessed the data for it.

Was elected a member of the Council of the Royal Society, and again in 1766, in 1767 and in 1772.

1761. Visited Belgium and Holland.

1762. April 30. The University of Oxford conferred upon him the degree of D.C.L.

August. Returned to America and shortly afterward received the thanks of the Pennsylvania Assembly, "as well for the faithful discharge of his duty to the province in particular as for the many and important services done to America in general during his residence in Great Britain."

1763. Spent half the year in a tour through the northern Colonies, inspecting and regulating the post offices in the several provinces, and travelled about 1600 miles.

The Assembly appointed him a Commissioner to dispose of the public money appropriated to the raising and paying an army to act against the Indians and to defend the frontier.

1764. There having been two insurrections of the frontier inhabitants of the province in December of the previous year, by which twenty friendly Indians living under the protection of the government had been murdered, and further mischief was threatened, Franklin, to strengthen the hands of the weak government by rendering the proceedings of the rioters odious, wrote his "Narrative of the late Massacre in Lancaster County of a number of Indians, friends of this Province." In it he appealed to the people to maintain the honor of the government and protect peaceable citizens, even though they be Indians.

Afterwards when armed rioters started for Philadelphia with the avowed intention of murdering 140 Indian converts who had been brought by the government for safety to that city, Franklin, at the request of Governor

Penn, formed a military association of nearly 1000 citizens to resist these rioters, the so-called Paxton Boys, who on reaching Germantown and learning of the measures taken for the defense of the city, desisted from further action.

April 12. Franklin published another pamphlet, entitled "Cool Thoughts on the present situation of our Public Affairs," in which he urged that the King should take the government of the Colony into his own hands and indemnify the Proprietaries.

May. Was elected Speaker of the Assembly.

At the election in the autumn for a new Assembly, strenuous and successful efforts were made by the Proprietary party to defeat Franklin because of the zeal and perseverance with which he had advocated the cause of the people against the Proprietaries. By a small majority he lost his seat in the Assembly, to which he had been annually elected for 14 years, even during his absence in Europe, as a delegate from the City of Philadelphia; but nevertheless the popular party, with which Franklin was in sympathy, were in the majority in the new Assembly.

Peace with the Proprietary Government was only temporary. The question of taxing their estates had come up in a new form and finally resulted in the Assembly, in November, again sending Franklin to England as their agent to petition the Crown for a change of government and to look after the interests of the province. The Assembly having no money in the Treasury then available for Franklin's expenses, the merchants of Philadelphia at once raised 1100 pounds to be lent to the Province for this purpose.

While in England, as the agent selected to defend the rights of a single province at the Court of Great Britain, he became the bold defender of the rights of

America in general. He exerted his powers in endeavors to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act. Writing to Charles Thomson, on July 11, 1765, he said: "The tide was too strong against us. The nation was provoked by American claims of independence [of Parliament in regard to the power of taxing the colonists] and all parties joined in resolving by this act to settle the point. We might as well have hindered the sun's setting. That we could not do. But since it is down, my friend, and it may be long before it rises again, let us make as good a night of it as we can. We may still light candles. Frugality and industry will go a great way towards indemnifying us. Idleness and pride tax with a heavier hand than kings and parliaments. If we can get rid of the former, we may easily bear the latter."

1766. Underwent his memorable examination in the House of Commons relative to the repeal of the American Stamp Act. The light he threw upon colonial affairs, more probably than all other causes combined, determined Parliament to repeal the bill. Burke said the scene reminded him of a master examined by a parcel of school boys, and George Whitfield, the great preacher, wrote that Franklin "gained immortal honor by his behavior at the bar of the House." Sparks says: "There was no event in Franklin's life more creditable to his talents and character or which gave him so much celebrity as this examination before the House of Commons."

Elected a Foreign Member of the Königliche Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften at Göttingen.

1767. Travelled on the Continent and was presented at the French Court.

June 26. Appointed by "Order in Council" one of the Commissioners to settle the boundary between the Provinces of New York and New Jersey.

1768. April 1. The Assembly of Georgia appointed him agent in England for that Colony, and reappointed him annually so long as he remained in Europe.

1769. Elected President of the American Philosophical Society and reëlected annually so long as he lived.

July. Again visited France and found "our dispute much attended to."

November 8. Unanimously chosen by the House of Representatives of the Colony of New Jersey as their agent in London.

1770. The Assembly of Massachusetts appointed him agent in England for that Colony.

1771. Elected corresponding member of the Bataafsch Genootschap der Proefondervindelijke Wijsbegeerte, Rotterdam.

Made a tour through Scotland and Ireland.

Began to write his Autobiography, "which to this day not only remains one of the most widely read and readable books in our language, but has had the distinction of enriching the literature of nearly every other."

Presented to Harvard University "many valuable books."

1772. Elected one of the eight foreign members of the Royal Academy of Sciences of Paris.

Served on a Committee of the Royal Society to report on lightning conductors for the Board of Ordnance of the British Government.

1773. A French translation of his works, edited by Dubourg, in 2 volumes 4to, was published in Paris.

His pen was constantly engaged in advocating the interests of the Colonies, and he was continually publishing short papers in the London magazines and newspapers to influence public opinion. In this year ap-

peared two of his cleverest political satires, "Rules for Reducing a Great Empire to a Small One" and an "Edict by the King of Prussia." The latter was written to controvert the argument frequently urged in England, that had the colonists remained in Great Britain they would have been absolutely subject to its laws and that their emigration to America had not changed this condition. The "Edict" purported to be an assumption of sovereignty over Great Britain, because of the original colonization from Germany, and it was so well done that it was for a time actually believed by some to be genuine.

Transmitted the Hutchinson letters to Massachusetts.

Sent to Lord Dartmouth the petition of Massachusetts for the removal of Gov. Hutchinson.

1774. January 11. Underwent his examination before the Privy Council on the petition of the Massachusetts Assembly for the removal of Gov. Hutchinson, and on the transactions relating to Gov. Hutchinson's letters which had come into his possession, and which had enraged the Ministerial party to such a degree that it determined to subject him to what was meant to be a deathblow at his honor. He was the "butt of invective ribaldry for near an hour," which he bore with unflinching firmness, in his capacity as agent of the Colony of Massachusetts.

Dismissed by the British Government from the office of Deputy Postmaster-General in North America.

Communicated to the Royal Society his observations on the stilling of waves by means of oil.

In his efforts to avert the impending crisis he offered, at his own risk and without knowing whether he should be owned in doing it, to pay the whole damage of destroying the tea at Boston, provided the Acts made against the Province of Massachusetts Bay were repealed.

Prepared for the information of the British Ministry "Terms that might probably produce a durable union between Great Britain and the Colonies."

He was pronounced by Chatham, in the House of Lords, "an honor not to the English nation only, but to human nature."

December. Presented to Lord Dartmouth the petition to the King adopted by the first Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia in September. The Ministry now determined upon vigorous measures to bring the Colonies to a due submission and passed the Act shutting the ports of New England. Lord North shortly afterward caused it to be made known to Franklin that the Administration, for the sake of peace, might repeal the tax on tea and the Port Act, but "that the Massachusetts Acts, being real amendments of their Constitution, must, for that reason, be continued, as well as to be a standing example of the power of Parliament." Franklin replied that "the people of Massachusetts must suffer all the hazards and mischiefs of war rather than admit the alteration of their charter and laws by Parliament. They that can give up an essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." These were the last words which he addressed to the Ministry.

1775. Finding that the tension between Great Britain and the Colonies was so great that his usefulness as the agent of the Colonies in England was at an end, he returned to America and landed at Philadelphia on May 5.

May 6. The Assembly of Pennsylvania unanimously elected him a delegate to the second Continental Congress, about to assemble at Philadelphia. In this Congress he served on not less than ten important committees.

June 3. Appointed by the Congress on the Committee to draft a petition to the King.

June 23. Appointed by the Congress on the Committee to draw up "A Declaration by the Representatives of the United Colonies of North America, now met in Congress at Philadelphia, setting forth the causes and necessity of their taking up arms."

June 30. Appointed by the Assembly of Pennsylvania a member of the Committee of Safety and by the Committee unanimously elected its Chairman.

July 21. Proposed in the Congress "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union."

July 22. Appointed by the Congress on the Committee to consider and report on the resolution of House of Commons, commonly called Lord North's plan for conciliation.

July 26. Elected unanimously by the Congress Postmaster-General of the Colonies.

September 30. Appointed by the Congress on the Committee to repair to the camp at Cambridge and confer with Gen. Washington and others touching the most effectual method of continuing, supporting and regulating a Continental army.

November 29. Appointed by the Congress on the Committee to correspond "with our friends in Great Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the world."

1776. Planned an appeal from the Congress to France for aid and wrote the instructions of Silas Deane, a member of the Congress, who was to convey it. Silas Deane reported to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, viz.: "Being known to be his [Franklin's] friend, is one of the best recommendations a man can wish to have in *France*, and will introduce him where titles fail."

March 20. Appointed by the Congress a Commissioner to Canada to negotiate a union with the Colonies.

June 11. Appointed by the Congress on the Committee to draft the Declaration of Independence.

June 18. Represented the city of Philadelphia in the Conference of Committees of the Province of Pennsylvania, held pursuant to the resolution of the Congress of May 15, "to adopt such government as shall in the opinion of the representatives of the people best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular and America in general," and which finally renounced all allegiance to Great Britain.

July 8. Elected to represent Philadelphia in the Convention to frame a Constitution for the State of Pennsylvania.

July 16. Unanimously chosen President of the Convention which framed a Constitution for the State of Pennsylvania.

August 2. Signed the Declaration of Independence.

September 2. Appointed by the Pennsylvania Convention a Justice of the Peace of the City and County of Philadelphia.

September 16. Appointed by the Congress to confer with Lord Howe on the subject of reconciliation.

September 26. Unanimously appointed by the Congress one of the three Commissioners to the Court of France to secure the active aid and coöperation of that country.

He collected all the money he could command, amounting to between 3000 and 4000 pounds, and loaned it to the Congress, which demonstration of his confidence encouraged others to lend their money in support of the cause.

In October he started on his mission in the sloop of war "Reprisal," and arrived in France on December 4.

December 13. On his arrival Silas Deane wrote to Dumas, the secret agent of the United States in Holland: "Here is the hero, and philosopher, and patriot, all united in this celebrated American, who at the age of seventy-four risks all dangers for his country"; and Arthur Lee, in a letter to Lord Shelburne (December 23), calls him "our Pater Patriæ."

The story of his mission has been summed up by his biographer and, a century later, his successor at the Court of France, the Hon. John Bigelow, as follows: "He became at once an object of greater popular interest than any other man in France—an interest which, during his eight years' service there, seemed always on the increase. Streets in numerous cities, and several societies, were named after him; the French Academy paid him its highest honors, and he conferred more distinction upon any salon he frequented than it could reciprocate. He animated French society with a boundless enthusiasm for the cause of the rebel colonists, persuaded the Government that the interests of France required her to aid them, obtained a treaty of alliance at a crisis in their fortunes in the winter of 1777, when such an alliance was decisive, and the great moral advantage of a Royal frigate to convey the news of it to America. A few months later he signed the treaties which bound the two countries to mutual friendship and defense.

"In February of the following year General Lafayette . . . . returning to France on leave, brought a commission from the American Congress to Dr. Franklin as sole plenipotentiary of the United States to the Court of France. From this time to the close of the war it was

Franklin's paramount duty to encourage the French Government to supply the colonists with money. How successfully he discharged this duty may be inferred from the following statement of the advances made by France upon his solicitation . . . . . ; in all 26,000,000 francs. To obtain these aids at a time when France was not only at war but practically bankrupt, and in defiance of the strenuous resistance of Necker, the Minister of Finance, was an achievement the credit of which, there is the best reason for believing, was mainly due to the matchless diplomacy of Franklin."

An eminent French historian has said, "His virtues and his renown negotiated for him; and before the second year of his mission had expired, no one conceived it possible to refuse fleets and an army to the compatriots of Franklin."

1777. January 1. Appointed by the Congress Commissioner also to the Court of Spain, but declined on account of age and health.

June 17. Elected a member of the Royal Medical Society of Paris.

December 10. Elected by the Pennsylvania Assembly a delegate to the Congress.

Obtained from France a gift of 2,000,000 livres.

1778. February 6. Negotiated a treaty of amity and commerce and also a treaty of alliance with France.

April. Declined to consider a peace with Great Britain which included an offensive alliance against France.

July. An office, a pension for life and a peerage were held out to Franklin as a reward for betraying the American cause, and his answer to these proposals was one of the most notable productions of his pen.*

* Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States. Edited by Francis Wharton. Washington, 1889. II, 633. 50th Cong. 1st Sess. H. R. Mis. Doc. 603.

September 14. Appointed by the Congress Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of France.

Obtained from France a loan of 3,000,000 livres.

1779. Obtained from France a further loan of 1,000,000 livres.

During his residence in France, in addition to his diplomatic duties, he was kept busily engaged in purchasing supplies and munitions of war and shipping them to America; in acting as Judge of Admiralty; in commissioning and equipping privateers to operate against British commerce; in negotiating loans and honoring the numerous drafts drawn on him by the Congress; in attending to the needs of American prisoners in Great Britain, and in various other ways advancing the cause of our independence.

An edition of his "Works," edited by Vaughan, was published in London.

1780. Obtained from France another loan of 4,000,000 livres.

A German translation of his "Works" was published at Dresden in 3 volumes 8vo.

December 4. Count de Vergennes, Minister of Foreign Affairs, writing to the French Minister in Philadelphia, said: "As to Dr. Franklin, his conduct leaves Congress nothing to desire. It is as zealous and patriotic as it is wise and circumspect." Again, on Febuary 15, 1781, he wrote to him: "If you are questioned respecting an opinion of Dr. Franklin, you may without hesitation say that we esteem him as much on account of the patriotism as the wisdom of his conduct; and it has been owing in a great part to this cause, and the confidence we put in the veracity of Dr. Franklin, that we have determined to relieve the pecuniary embarrassments in which he has been placed by Congress."

1781. January 31. Elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston.

March 12. Tendered to the Congress his resignation as Minister to France on account of age and health, but the Congress declined to accept it and requested his continuance in their service till the peace.

June 19. Appointed by the Congress one of the Commissioners to negotiate a peace with Great Britain.

December 20. Elected one of the 24 foreign members of the Academy of Science, Letters and Arts of Padua.

Obtained a loan of 5,000,000 florins from Holland and from France a further loan of 4,000,000 livres.

1782. Obtained from France another loan of 6,000,000 livres.

July 16. Entered into a treaty with the King of France for the repayment of loans, which in all amounted to 18,000,000 livres.

Wrote and printed on his private press at Passy an imitation "Supplement to the Boston Independent Chronicle," in which he sought to arouse public opinion on the Continent against the atrocities committed upon innocent women and children in America by the Indians in the pay of Great Britain. In sending a copy to Dumas he said: "The FORM may perhaps not be genuine, but the *substance* is truth."

Presented a "rich donation of Works" to the Public Library at Franklin, Massachusetts.

September 17. Appointed by the Congress a Commissioner to negotiate a treaty of peace with Great Britain.

Proposed to the British Commissioner to abolish privateering and neutralize non-combatants and their property.

November 30. Negotiated a preliminary treaty of peace with Great Britain.

1783. January 20. Negotiated an armistice with Great Britain.

February 25. Negotiated a contract with the King of France for a further loan of 6,000,000 livres.

April 3. Concluded a treaty of amity and commerce with the King of Sweden.

September 3. Negotiated the definitive treaty of peace with Great Britain, in which the independence of the United States was recognized.

Was elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

An Italian translation of his "Works" was published at Padua.

1784. Appointed by Louis XVI one of the Commissioners to investigate the theories of Mesmer, and their report resulted in the exposure and flight of Mesmer.

Elected a member of the Royal Academy of History of Madrid.

Published his "Advice to Emigrants" who would remove to America, of which editions appeared in the English, French and German languages.

1785. February 23. Elected an Honorary Member of the Manchester (Eng.) Literary and Philosophical Society.

March 18. Elected Honorary Associate of the Société Royale de Physique, d'Histoire Naturelle et des Arts d'Orleans.

April 20. Received leave from Congress to return home.

In acknowledging the notification of his retiring, Count de Vergennes, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote to Franklin: "I can assure you, sir, that the

esteem the King entertains for you does not leave you anything to wish, and that his Majesty will learn with real satisfaction that your fellow-citizens have rewarded in a manner worthy of you, the important services that you have rendered them."

June. Elected Associate Member of the Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et des Arts de Lyon.

July 9. Signed a treaty of amity and commerce with the King of Prussia, in which he embodied his advanced views on neutrality, privateering and the exemption of private property from capture at sea, which he had published in a pamphlet in that same year.

On his taking farewell leave, the King of France presented to him his miniature surrounded with 408 diamonds.

July 12. Set out for Havre on his return to America. The infirmity under which he labored rendered the motion of a carriage insupportable, and the Queen's litter, borne by Spanish mules, was graciously placed at his disposal and conveyed him from Passy to Havre.

September 14. Landed at Philadelphia.

September 15. Received a congratulatory address from the Pennsylvania Assembly in which the following language was used: "The Representatives of the freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, in the most affectionate manner congratulate you on your safe arrival in your country after so long an absence on the most important business. We likewise congratulate you on the firm establishment of the independence of America and the settlement of a general peace, after the interesting struggle in which we were so long engaged. We are confident, sir, that we speak the sentiments of this whole country, when we say that

your services in the public councils and negotiations have not only merited the thanks of the present generation, but will be recorded in the pages of history to your immortal honor. And it is particularly pleasing to us that while we are sitting as members of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, we have the happiness of welcoming into the State a person who was so greatly instrumental in forming its free Constitution."

October. Was elected a Councillor by the City of Philadelphia; he qualified on the 17th, and on the 18th was unanimously elected President of the Council.

October 21. Presented to the American Philosophical Society a lengthy paper "On the Causes and Cure of Smoky Chimneys."

October 26. Was chosen President of Pennsylvania by a vote of 76 out of 77 votes cast, and was unanimously reëlected in 1786 and 1787. He declined to benefit by the compensation given by the State for his services as its President, and devoted the same to public uses, such as colleges, schools, building of churches, etc.

December 2. Contributed to the American Philosophical Society a paper "Containing Sundry Maritime Observations," which included the subjects of the best form of rigging to improve the swiftness of vessels, the avoidance of accidents that may occasion loss of ships at sea, and his observations on the course, velocity and temperature of the Gulf Stream, for the benefit of navigation on the Atlantic coast.

The western territory of North Carolina was organized into a State and, in compliment to Franklin, was called the State of Franklin, but after a brief existence it gave up the struggle and a decade later was again organized as a State and called the State of Tennessee.

1786. January 28. Contributed to the American Philosophical Society "A Description of a New Stove for Burning of Pit Coal and Consuming all its Smoke" and a paper on "A Slowly Sensible Hygrometer."

May 5. Elected Corresponding Member of the Societa Patriotica diretta all' Avanzamento dell Agricoltura, delle Arti e delle Manifatture di Milano.

1787. Took an active part in establishing "The Society for Political Enquiries," which had for its object mutual improvement in the knowledge of government and the advancement of political science. He was elected its first President.

Chosen delegate from Pennsylvania to the Convention to frame the Constitution of the United States. At the opening of the Convention he moved that the sessions be begun with prayer, and in the speech in support of his motion he said: "The longer I live, the more convincing proof I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the Sacred Writings, that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."

According to Bigelow, "To the joint influence of Franklin and Washington probably should be ascribed the final adoption of the Constitution which this Convention framed, and which continues to be the fundamental law of the United States"; and the same authority states that "the most original, if not the most ingenious, and perhaps, in view of the great difficulties it disposed of, the most

important feature of the Constitution they constructed —that which gave the States equal representation in the Upper House or Senate, and in the Lower House representation according to population, was the device of Franklin."

July 16. Elected Honorary Member of the Medical Society of London.

1788. Helped to organize the first society formed for the abolition of slavery and, as its President, wrote and signed the first remonstrance against slavery addressed to the American Congress.

Contributed four papers to the American Philosophical Society.

1789. Elected a Member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg.

1790. April 17. Died at Philadelphia, æt. 84 years and 3 months.

April 21. Buried, by his special direction, in Christ Church Burying Ground, southeast corner of Fifth and Arch streets, Philadelphia.

He had "nations for his mourners and the great and good throughout the world as his eulogists."

Congress being then in session, the House of Representatives resolved, "That the members shall wear the customary badge of mourning for one month, as a mark of veneration to the memory of a citizen whose native genius was not more an ornament to human nature than his various exertions of it have been precious to science, to freedom and to his country."

In the French Assembly, upon the announcement of his death, it was decreed "that the National Assembly shall wear mourning during three days for Benjamin Franklin," and formal eulogiums were pronounced before the Assembly and the Municipality of Paris.

1791. March 1. Provost Smith delivered, by appointment, before the American Philosophical Society, an eulogium on Franklin, in the presence of the President, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Municipal Corporation of Philadelphia.

By his will Franklin gave £100 to the schools of Boston, the interest of which is to be used in annually providing silver medals as rewards for the scholars. He gives this, he says, because "I was born in Boston, New England, and owe my first instructions in literature to the free grammar schools established there." Bigelow says that these "Medals have rewarded the diligence and exemplary conduct of over 4000 boys who have been found to merit them, and have no doubt stimulated to extra exertion perhaps hundreds of thousands who were less fortunate."

In another item of his will he says: "I have considered that, among artisans, good apprentices are most likely to make good citizens, and, having myself been bred to a manual art, printing, in my native town, and afterward assisted to set up my business in Philadelphia by kind loans of money from two friends there, which was the foundation of my fortune, and of all the utility in life that may be ascribed to me, I wish to be useful even after my death, if possible, in forming and advancing other young men, that may be serviceable to their country in both these towns. To this end I devote two thousand pounds sterling [about one-fifteenth of his entire estate], of which I give one thousand thereof to the inhabitants of the town of Boston, in Massachusetts, and the other thousand to the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, in trust," the income to be let out upon interest to young

married artificers under the age of 25 years. This trust has been maintained, and its principal has increased by the addition of interest, and is still in operation in both cities.

To the State of Pennsylvania he bequeathed his portrait, painted by Martin.

To the American Philosophical Society his set of the "Histoire de l'Académie Royale des Sciences avec les Memoires de Mathématique & de Physique" in 92 volumes.

Since his death, Bigelow says, "as in life, his fame has gone on increasing. No American has ever received such varied and extensive homage from his countrymen. There is no State in the United States and there are few counties that have not a town called Franklin (Ohio has nineteen of them); scarce a town that does not boast of its Franklin street, or its Franklin Square, or its Franklin Hotel, or its Franklin Bank, or its Franklin Insurance Company, and so on: his bust or portrait is everywhere."

There yet remains, however, to be erected by his grateful country a suitable memorial in honor of this citizen, to whose genius, patriotism and devotion it, in large part, owes its independent political existence.

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